

Tour Schedule

April 21 to 23: Blayney to Orange 140th Anniversary Tour
(Tour cancelled #)

May 7: Sydney Light Rail Construction Tour
(Booking form on Page 4 of this newsletter)

June 9 to 13: Broken Hill & Peterborough with 621/721
(Booking form on Page 5 of this newsletter)

July 16: Newington Armoury Railway Tour
(Booking form on Page 6 of this newsletter)

Aug 19/20: Mines & Lines of Lake Macquarie with Ed Tonks
(Booking form in May newsletter)

Please note the April Blayney to Orange 140th Anniversary Tour has been cancelled due to Western Line trackwork by John Holland Rail.

For more information contact:

ARHSnsw Tours on 02 8394 9019 or 0428333443.

Hawkesbury River Tour Report

In The Wake of the 'General Gordon' History Tour

The fine weather on Sunday 26 February was welcomed by our 70 passengers who travelled to Brooklyn to join the Central Coast Ferries catamaran ferry *Sorrento*.

Departure was at 10.00hrs for a very informative and fascinating cruise along the Hawkesbury River. Local historian Peter Rae provided a on-board large screen presentation and commentary. Points of historic interest along the river included the Juno Point WW1 defences, the river bed mine field, the West Head defences and inclined railway, the WW1 Woy Woy Airfield and wreck sights of Australia's first naval fleet ships *HMAS Swan* and *Parramatta*.

A return to Brooklyn for a morning tea break before the cruise continued to the bridges where Peter was ably assisted by Bill Phippen OAM in providing a detailed history of the two Hawkesbury River Railway bridges and why the first one failed. On our return to Brooklyn, Peter and Bill were thanked for their efforts and most adjourned to local establishments for a late lunch.

Spencer Ross Tours Director

RAILWAY LUNCHEON CLUB REPORT: ERSKINEVILLE & ALEXANDRIA

Barracks (or Rest Houses to give them their correct name) have been provided over the years to give train crews a place to stay whilst away from their home depot, and Sydney has been no exception. Such places have received no attention from the Luncheon Club in the past, so we thought it was time to have a look at what survives near Eveleigh.

On Wednesday, 15 March 2017, after assembling at Erskineville Station, Stuart Sharp gave the group a short history of this somewhat forgotten stop, which is now a rare example of the once common 1912 building, with Erskineville being in its original state.

Then it was a short walk to look at the barracks. In 1903 a complex consisting ultimately of the semi-detached cottages at Nos 35 and 37 Brandling Street Alexandria, and the two storey building next door at no. 39 Brandling Street was established. It consisted of 25 rooms, which were somewhat spartan by today's standards. This complex was closed in 1981 and replaced by a purpose built barracks in Railway Parade Alexandria, with air conditioning and single bedrooms with ensuites.

In January 2008, the 1981 building was closed as a barracks, and (then) Countrylink took out a contract with Travelodge in Railway Square to provide lay over accommodation for train crews whilst in Sydney. The buildings in Brandling Street have been sold off and the Railway Parade building converted to other railway purposes.

On our way to lunch at the Sette Café on the ground floor of the Channel 7 Building at Eveleigh, the opportunity was taken to look at the site of the former Alexandria Goods Yard, and those parts of the former Eveleigh Workshops which are now accessible to the public.

Our thanks go to retired driver Graeme Kirkby, and also to John Oakes and driver Bob Gibson for their assistance on the day.

There is no outing in April. Our next outing is on Wednesday 17 May 2017 and we are going to Macquarie Fields and Minto. We meet on the down platform at Macquarie Fields at 10.30am. Lunch will be at the Mirage Hotel at Minto. There will be no outing in June and in July (note the change in months) we will be going to look at the new stations at Cheltenham and/or Concord West.

Gary Hughes, Manager Railway Luncheon Club



The barracks at 39 Brandling Street, with the semi-detached Nos 37 and 35 on the right. This image was taken in 1979 whilst the buildings were serving as a barracks. Image Graeme Kirkby



The 1981 building in Railway Parade Alexandria, prior to its closure as a barracks. Image Graeme Kirkby